

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, June 24. 1707.

IN discoursing on the Folly and Absurdity of our Divisions, I came in my last to a Sort of People, who in their abundant Prudence and yet greater Zeal against the Union, honestly own they were for a War.

We are past the Fear of it now, *Blessed be GOD*, but 'tis impossible to look back on it without some Concern, and being now discoursing on the Folly of our Breaches, it comes naturally to speak to it.

I gave 5 Heads of things which would follow on a War, and the last I come now to, that in Case of a War, unless Scotland were conquer'd, she was undone; I am showing the Folly and Absurdity of a Breach between the Nations. Was ever any Folly like this? Did ever Nation begin a War on purpose to be beaten? Would any Nation fight when they must be conquer'd or ruin'd? Was ever Folly like this?

As to making it out, I think there is no Difficulty at all in that, for the Consequence of things makes it plain; the Proposers of this Blessed Medium for the Nations Happiness we all know; *who they are for*, and, *who they serve*, is plain, and abating a few deluded People, they all profess'd it openly, that King *James*, &c. and the restoring his Race was the End they aim'd at, the Allies or Assistants for this were always Popery and *French Power*—If these were not subdued, where would *Scotland* be, what Miseries would attend the least Success in this Case, let any Man judge!

If the *Scots* had the better in this Strife, who would be their Masters, to whose Government would these submit? It is too evident, nothing could protect them from *French Power*, but the *English Power*; and how is it, Gentlemen in *Scotland*, that you had

had rather be Ours by Conquest, than Union?

I am perswaded, they that cry out against the Union in Scotland, I mean among those who really are not Jacobites, very few have suffer'd themselves to consider these things, few have gone this Length in the Debate with themselves.

This fully manifests the reasonable Part of the Subject, I am upon; how absurd and ridiculous it is for us to differ, snarle and quarrel among our selves, when nothing but this Union could have been our Safety on either Hand; and when being made, the Contract is pass'd, the Match made, in its not being made our Ruin on all sides had appear'd; for a divided State was always inconsistent with the true Happiness of either Kingdom, in its being preserv'd, consists without doubt our Happiness—Besides, I lay it down as a Maxim, It must be maintain'd now 'tis made, neither side can, by any thing but downright Violence, infringe it—Where then is the Sence of our differing, who are and for ever, I hope, shall be united in Form? To differ, is but to bind our selves to the Form, and rob our selves of the Effect; to be oblig'd by the Bond, and deprived of the Benefit.

This is like two marry'd Persons, who resolved to share all the Difficulties and all the ill Circumstances of a marry'd State, but to enjoy none of the Comforts of it; to partake of and be bound to the Troubles of that Life, without any of the Enjoyments. How foolish this is, let any one judge!

But here is one thing yet behind—Look ye to it, Gentlemen, on any side that love to differ, that seek Contention, that are fond of Strife, and that will not preserve, much less promote the Blessed Harmony of Britain, which by the Union plainly presents it self to you! Look ye to it, I say, and take it for your Labour, for all Men are not alike foolish; the Union is made, the Happiness is and will be general, it is and will be offer'd alike to all; but if ye will not accept of your Share of it, if you resolve to keep Feuds alive, resolve to be discontented, and be ever quarreling; if you will rob

your selves of the Comfort of Peace, and the exceeding Benefit propos'd to you, be it to your selves, two things will happen.

1. Others, wiser than you, will enjoy their Share of it without you; the Peace, the Prosperity, the Honouring Estate of Britain is and shall be secured without you; and if you will not have your Share in it, you must let it alone.

2. All your Gall and ill Nature, all your repining and reproaching, all your intriguing against and maligning your Neighbours, shall neither interrupt nor prevent it.

In this, I hope, I have no need to fear being esteem'd a false Prophet; I think, if any Man will look back upon the Treaty of Union, the Manner of its being carry'd on and contriv'd, the Conditions and its whole Frame and Contexture; it is no Presumption to say, it is the most indissoluble Compact now made upon Earth; no Treaty of Peace, no Confederacy, no Union, that I have ever met with, stands either upon like or equal Terms, and I believe, it exceeds all the Treaties that ever were made upon Earth in these particular things.

1. In its being out of the Power of either Party to intrench upon or infringe it.

2. In its being so equally the Interest of either Party to maintain and support it.

I could run back to the Particulars of the Treaty to exemplifie these two Heads, but I hope 'tis needless; it has often been affirm'd, and I have so much insisted on it, that it would be needless to repeat; there is no constituted Power left now in the whole Administration, that can contravene the Union, nothing can be done under Pretence of Law, nothing by straining or extending the Law: The Hawks and Harpyes of the Law, that used to plunder and destroy Mankind, that us'd to suck the Blood, and rifle the Houses of the innocent Subjects in both Nations, under Pretence of Law, and by florid Speeches and fine Turns of Speech, Infamous Rhetorick! us'd to make constructive Treasons and accumulative Crimes, which as the noble Lord Russel well observ'd in his last Speech, was the worst Sort of Murther: These, I say, can have no Room to carry on the Contrivances of arbitrary

or tyrannical Princes, or devouring Parties, to injure, infringe or invade the Union.

The Union will be the Test of all the Transactions of this Nation; if a Law be propos'd in Parliament, it will require no other Argument to crush and suppress it in the very Beginning, than to say it is against the Union; if it interferes with the Union, it cannot be a Law, it cannot pass into an Act, and if it should pass into an Act, the Union shall be pleaded in Bar of its Authority, as a thing no Law can be good against, because it is in it self superior to that very

Power, that now must make our Laws; and no Power can make Laws, which by their Constitution they have no Authority to do.

It is on this Foundation that I take upon me to affirm, the Happiness of this Island, fix'd on the Union Principle, may be envy'd, plotted against, and attempted; it cannot be hurt, broken, dissolv'd or invaded by any of the Parties, who appear so much against it, but like the Stone in the Gospel, *whoever falls upon it, shall be broken to pieces, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind them to powder.*

MISCELLANEA.

I have a long Task cut me out in a Letter printed in the last Review, and Abundance of serious Questions put to me about the present State of this War: Some People, that think them selves very witty upon the Review, and now he is out of their hearing, pretend to banter him, that seldom say much to him when he is at hand; tell us, he wants Subjects to solicit for Questions, and really wants Business— Let that be as it will, I only desire such ill-natur'd Folks to answer all these things for me— They shall find, I shall not want something to say all the while without it— And if they won't, let them never more say, the Review has a Famine of Materials, for I'll forfeit all my Pretence to Pen and Ink, if any Man answers these Questions effectually, as long as this War lasts, and let him begin as soon as he pleases.

Well, however, Gentlemen, I must enter this Field, and as the Author of the Letter, I think, begins at the wrong End of the War, goes first into Spain, and comes back by Germany into Flanders; thus setting the Map of the Campaign with the bottom upward; so I shall begin at the wrong End of his Letter, and set his Bundle of Questions with the bottom upward.

His last Question is about the Affair in Flanders, and he must know, whether the French will fight or no? And if they will, whether they shall be beaten or no? I wish, I may be serv'd in this, as I was in one Review.

last Year on the same Subject, viz. To give my Opinion at a distance, that the French would not fight, and the News of the Battle came the very same Day the Paper was printed; happy Conjuration! So would I always be contended: I gave my Opinion, that the French would not fight, because I thought it was not their Interest, nor their Business to fight, and I am satisfy'd, they have thought so too many a time.

Had any Man ask'd me my Opinion, whether the Duke of Orleans would have been so beaten at the Siege of Turin; I should have said readily, it was impossible and not to be expected— And the Reason is plain, no Man, that knows any thing of these Matters, could be so weak to imagine, that the French would stay in their Trenches to be attack'd, where they had their Circumvaluations to guard, their different Camps to secure, their Trenches and Batteries to defend, and consequently could not bring above two thirds of their Army to act; it was impossible, that any General, but the D. of Orleans, could be so infatuated, and had he rais'd his Camp two Days before, he had sent off and sav'd all his heavy Cannon, Ammunition and Baggage— He had had his united Force to have stod his Ground against the Germans, and had he defeated them, the City must have fallen of course; or if he thought not fit to engage, he had sav'd the Army, and prevented the third